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MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director, Office of Operations

SUBJECT : Requested Comments on African Broadcast Monitoring

REFERENCE : 3 June 1957 Memorandum, AD/OC to AD/CI

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1. We believe the proposed plan for monitoring of African broadcasts could contribute significant and useful information from areas at present not adequately covered by other reporting activity. Monitoring of local broadcasts, particularly those of the North African area, would reduce dependence on French or Egyptian broadcast services for information on this area. More local coverage of African broadcasting would permit a better appraisal of reactions to Soviet and American activities, as well as furnish other data which would be useful for intelligence purposes.

2. From the standpoint of US strategic interests, two African areas--north and west--deserve immediate monitoring attention, and in that order of priority. Because of American air bases located in North Africa, the United States has specific strategic interests in that area and is vitally interested in the political developments of the North African states. Our relations there are also closely related with relations with our NATO ally, France. The West African area now is of lesser strategic interest, but the rapid political evolution of the region and the emergence of new, and possibly unstable, independent states is likely to create a future problem for the United States and an opportunity for the Soviet Union to expand its influence. Since political development is at a slower pace in the East African area at present, it is of less immediate concern than the other two areas. However, the problems of Kenya and Uganda are likely to assume serious proportions in a few years. We concur that increasing coverage of South African broadcasts is not at present warranted.

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3. Requirements in the two zones of immediate interest.

A. North Africa: The most immediate need is for information on the local political situation in the independent states of Morocco and Tunisia and on the nationalist campaign in Algeria. Monitoring of local broadcasts should supplement present reporting by the Department of State and

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[redacted] furnish details not reported by these sources. Broadcast coverage should diminish the delay in transmitting information from the field to Washington headquarters and then distributing the data within the intelligence community. Monitoring also should free the analyst from reliance on [redacted]

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[redacted] sources for reporting on North African events. In the special case of Algeria, where diplomatic reporting is necessarily limited because of the rebellion, monitoring of radio broadcasts could furnish more timely information on nationalist capabilities, intentions, casualties, equipment and reactions not now sufficiently available. In reference to the independent states, information is needed on internal political affairs, intraparty dissensions, reactions of leaders to internal and foreign events, and popular and official reaction to American and Soviet activities.

B. West Africa: Monitoring of broadcasts in this area of rapid political evolution would probably contribute even more information not obtained from other sources than in the case of North Africa. Vast parts of West Africa now are not adequately covered--Gambia, Sierra Leone, Togo, the Cameroons, interior French West Africa and Equatorial Africa, northern and eastern Nigeria and the Belgian Congo hinterland--and local broadcasts would provide much valuable data. In this area, timeliness of reporting is an even more serious problem than it is in the north, and the two-to-four-week delay in receiving dispatches could be reduced to two days by monitoring of broadcasts.

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At present our main interest is the political development of the various states, dissensions within the main parties, speeches by leading politicians outlining new policies, plans for a struggle against colonial rule, and reactions of these states to events beyond the national boundaries. The popular and official reaction to American and Communist activities and pronouncements would be of considerable interest, and the receipt of such information would permit a more meaningful interpretation of local reactions to world events. Plans of the Ghana government to utilize expanded broadcasting capabilities as a principal instrument for promoting West African nationalism would make all external transmissions from this source of particular interest.

C. East Africa: This area is third in priority because of the lesser degree of American strategic interest in the region and the slower pace of political evolution. However, Kenya and Uganda will probably be areas of considerable interest in a few years because of their growing political problems.

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Enclosures:

- A - Memorandum from Chief, [REDACTED] to AD/O
- B - African Survey, Parts I, II and III